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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, D.C. 20520

Attention Mr. Hoff
Keep this study together

S/S-3977

March 26, 1970

606

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER
THE WHITE HOUSE

SUBJECT: Letter to Mr. Harlow from Senator Thurmond Regarding Rudolf Hess' Imprisonment

In response to Mrs. Davis' request of March 13 I enclose a draft reply to Senator Thurmond from Mr. Timmons.

I also enclose the original correspondence for your files.

Theodore L. Eliot, Jr.
Executive Secretary

Enclosure:

1. Draft Letter
2. Original Correspondence

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY BTimmons DATE MAR 1 8 1983
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
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Clearances: EUR/GER - Mr. Sutterlin
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P07 S-127 GER

PROPOSED LETTER TO SENATOR
THURMOND FROM MR. TIMMONS

Dear Senator Thurmond:

Bryce Harlow asked me to reply to your recent letter to him giving him your views on Rudolf Hess' imprisonment and enclosing a memorandum prepared by Hess' son, Wolf Ruediger Hess.

Your understanding of the situation is quite correct. It is the position of the United States, Great Britain and France that Hess should now be released. This was formally proposed to the Soviets in 1964, 1966, 1969, and again in February of this year, but each time the Soviet reply was negative. Since Mr. Hess was imprisoned by Four Power authority, it would require Four Power agreement to free him.

We continue to follow the situation closely and will take whatever further action seems appropriate. You might be interested to know that as a result of Hess' recent illness, the conditions of his imprisonment have been somewhat ameliorated. This was done with Soviet agreement.

Sincerely,

Log #8183

THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE

REFERRAL

(21)

3077

To: State Secretariat

Date: March 13, 1970

ACTION REQUESTED

_____ Draft reply for:
_____ President's signature.
_____ Undersigned's signature.

_____ Memorandum for use as enclosure to reply.

_____ Direct reply.

_____ Furnish information copy.

_____ Suitable acknowledgment or other appropriate handling.

_____ Furnish copy of reply, if any.

_____ For your information.

_____ For comment.

(1)

NOTE

Prompt action is essential.

If more than 48 hours' delay is encountered, please telephone the undersigned immediately, Code 1450.

Basic correspondence should be returned when draft reply, memorandum, or comment is requested.

POL 27-12 GER

REMARKS:

Please prepare draft reply for Timmons' signature AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

Description:

__X__ Letter: _____ Telegram: Other:

To: Bryce Harlow

From: Sen. Strom Thurmond

Date: 3/4/70

Subject: Enc. materials relating to the situation of Rudolph Hess & recommending he should be released from the Spandau prison in the British zone. Also attached ic copy of interim reply by Harlow.

By direction of the President:

Patricia Smith

Jeanne W. Davis for

(3)

(Copy to remain with correspondence)

8183

3577

March 10, 1970

Dear Strom:

Thanks so much for the materials relating to the situation of Rudolph Hess along with your recommendation that he should be released.

I will certainly call your views to the attention of the President.

With warm regard,

Sincerely,

Bryce

Bryce N. Harlow
Counsellor to the President

Honorable Strom Thurmond
United States Senate
Washington, D. C. 20510

BNH:sr

bcc: Henry Kissinger w/incoming for draft reply under the signature of Bill Timmons

Bill Timmons

MAR 9 1970
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JOHN C. STENNIS, MISS., CHAIRMAN
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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

March 4, 1970

Mr. Bryce Harlow
The White House
Washington, D. C.

Dear Bryce:

Enclosed please find a memorandum concerning Rudolph Hess, which was given to me by Wolf Hess, the son of Rudolph Hess.

I understand that the position of this government and also that of France and England has been that Hess should be released. However, the Soviet Union has refused to agree to this.

It appears to me that there is no further purpose served in the continued imprisonment of Rudolph Hess, and I would appreciate your calling this matter to the attention of the President.

With kindest personal regards,

Sincerely,

Strom Thurmond

ST:yh
Enclosure

RUDOLPH HESS (Facts and chronology)

Born April 26, 1894, in Alexandria, Egypt. Volunteer in the first World War, first as an infantryman, later as a pilot -- became Lieutenant after combat. Wounded in action three times decorated.

After the war, studied economics, history, and law at Munich University.

First met Hitler in 1920; participated in the Beer Hall Putsch in 1923; was imprisoned at Landsberg.

Became Hitler's private secretary in 1925; in April, 1933, "Deputy of the Leader" of the Party; and in December 1933, Minister without portfolio, but never held a position in the government as high as in the Party.

Flew to Scotland on 10 May 1941. Was imprisoned by the British Government and brought to Nurenberg in the autumn of 1945; prosecuted before the Joint Military Tribunal on four charges. Acquitted of the charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity; found guilty of the two joint charges of aiding and abetting the preparation for and the implementation of a war of aggression.

Transferred on July 18, 1947, to the Allied Military Prison in Berlin-Spandau, together with six other principal defendants who had received prison sentences before the Joint Military Tribunal. (K. V. Neurath, (15-year sentence) released on November 8, 1954; E. Raeder (sentenced to life imprisonment, released in 1955; K. Doenitz, sentenced to 10 years, released October 1, 1956; W. Funk (life-long sentence) released May 16, 1957; B. V. Schirach (20-year sentence), released October 1, 1966; A. Speer (20-year sentence), released October 1, 1966.

The Spandau prison is located in the British Zone, and is guarded in monthly turns by the USA, Britain, France, and the USSR. The yearly cost for running the prison adds up -- to my knowledge -- to a total of $1 million of which the Federal Government of the Republic of Germany pays $100,000.

Since October 1, 1966, Rudolph Hess has been in actual solitary confinement in a building capable of holding 600 prisoners.

On November 19, 1969, Hess suffered a perforated duodenal ulcer, with peritonitis, and on November 24th,

during the USSR guard turn, he was transferred to the British Military Hospital, three miles from the prison. Despite the seriousness of his illness, the four-power agreement on transfer to adequate hospital facilities took five days. On December 1st, the family requested through Dr. Seidl, Hess' lawyer, that the famous Munich surgeon, Professor Zenker, be permitted to see the patient in consultation. The request was made to the four-power directorate at Spandau, and there was no reply.

In the hospital, he is kept under the four-power prison regulations -- guarded by four guards, one of each nationality, rotating in 8-hour shifts; under four-power directory; examined by four doctors, one of each nationality; and treated by these doctors, under the necessity of unanimous four-power decisions.

According to Colonel O'Brian, the Chief British Medical Officer of the Hospital, the ulcer is now healing. Hess' condition is aggravated by the usual infirmities of age, specifically, a weak heart, high blood pressure, bladder and prostate trouble.

On Christmas Eve, 1969, his family (wife and only son), saw him for the first time since he flew to Scotland

in 1941. The visit was for half an hour, under the eyes of three directors (USA, Britain, and USSR) and one guard. His wife and son were forbidden to touch him, even to shake hands. They were not permitted to discuss his case and were warned not to reveal any details of the visit, and especially not to reveal the condition of his health. They had to consent to be searched before their visit. Any infraction of these visiting regulations could result in denial of any further visits and imprisonment of the visitor himself.

The son visited his father for the second time on February 2nd, 1970, for half an hour under the same severe conditions.

W. R. Hess

Washington, D. C.
February 11, 1970

Wolf Ruediger Hess